

# Mechanical Memories Magazine

ISSUE 47

JULY 2010



*The only UK magazine dedicated to vintage coin-operated amusement machines*

# Mechanical Memories Magazine

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# Editorial

Hello, and here we are with the July issue – yes there is actually a July magazine this year! You'll remember we didn't quite make it last year, and to be honest, it's been a bit on the edge this year, but as you can see, I've just about scraped through. At the time of writing, there are less than two weeks to go to the school summer holidays and I have mega work to get done at Brighton, getting my two arcades ready for the holidays. So, although the magazine will be going to the printers in good time, I could be a bit pushed for time getting it in the post.....so you may well get it in August!

Talking of Brighton, if you've not yet visited my Mechanical Memories arcade, do try to do so during the summer. It's really easy to find; we're at beach level about 100 yards west of the Palace pier (now renamed Brighton pier). There will be a few days that I shall not be able to open, due to other commitments. I shall post these dates on my website, so keep an eye on the Announcements form.

[www.mechanicalmemoriesmuseum.co.uk](http://www.mechanicalmemoriesmuseum.co.uk)

Now, just in case there are any of you who have the slightest interest in football (I'm afraid I am not among you), I understand we didn't do too well in the World Cup; in fact, it appears our team were an absolute disgrace! Well, the front cover picture is just for you. It's a fantastic two-player football machine by the Full Team Football Company, c. early 1920s. The picture is from a postcard that came up on ebay a few weeks ago, which was listed as '*a football machine in front of a scenic railway at an amusement park*'. Unfortunately, there was no mention of where or when. I know the buyer of the postcard, so next time I see him, if there is any further information printed on the reverse, I'll let you know.

And finally, sincere congratulations to my wife Sharron on completing her studies. She is now the proud recipient of a B.Sc. Hons in adult nursing, and well on her way to joining the rest of us in gainful employment! Unfortunately, it does mean that she will no longer be hogging the computer, and I therefore have lost one excuse for the magazine being late in the future.....

Enjoy the summer, and I'll be back with the next issue in September

All the best

*Jerry*

# News and Coming Events

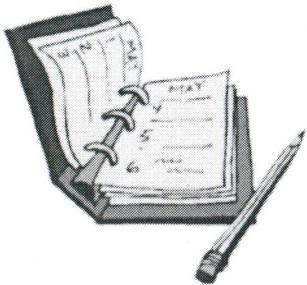
## New Venture for Darren

Darren Hesketh, who runs the Museum of Amusements at the Candle Workshops in Cheshire, told me recently that he is setting up a new vintage penny slot venue at Botany Bay, Chorley in Lancashire. Some of you will remember the large penny arcade at Botany Bay a good number of years ago, initially run by messers Hunt & Hooper, and later taken over by Clive Baker. Darren plans to have about thirty machines here, some of which will come from the Candle workshops, and both venues will be open throughout the school holidays. He will certainly have his work cut out running to venues during the summer, but I hope he does well. I'll try to publish an update in the September magazine, but Darren and I will both be mega busy over the next couple of months, so it may have to wait until October. In the meantime, if you in the general area of the Candle Workshops or Botany Bay, do try to pay them a visit.

## Chrome Plating

I mentioned in the May magazine that I had found a plating company that should be of interest to all of you who, like me, live in the Southeast (specifically Northwest Kent). I had intended passing on more info. last month, but there was not sufficient space on the news page, and I was very pressed for time anyway, so I left it till this month.

The firm is Jetage, (who will be advertising in the magazine every month – see page 23). They are one of the firms I occasionally used for anodising back in the days of JC Engineering, although at that time they were called Howard Plating, and to honest, their work wasn't brilliant! However, things have changed; the company has now been reorganised under new management, and I am sure they will be able to supply a top quality service. How can I be so sure? Because I know the plater who has been taken on to be responsible for the chrome and nickel work. He used to run another company that I used to do business with, so I have no doubts as to the quality we can expect. Anyway, I have quite a lot of plating to get done as soon as the school holidays are over, so I'll let you know how I get on.



## *Dates for your diary*

**Carters Steam Fair** 31<sup>st</sup> July – 30<sup>th</sup> August  
Beach Lawns, Weston-Super-Mare

**Great Dorset Steam Fair** 1<sup>st</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> September  
Tarrant Hinton, Dorset

**Jukebox Madness Show** 25<sup>th</sup> & 26<sup>th</sup> September  
Kempton Park racecourse

**MMM Vintage Slot Collectors' Show & Auction** 28<sup>th</sup> November  
Coundon Social Club, Coventry

**Bonhams Mechanical Music & Scientific Instruments Sale** 7<sup>th</sup> December  
Knowle

Don't forget – if you know of any event which would be of interest to readers of the magazine, please let me know so that I can include details in these pages.

# Dreamland

## MARGATE

### Save Dreamland Update July 2010

As the Scenic Railway reaches its 90th birthday this month, I am pleased to announce that the world's largest club of amusement ride enthusiasts, the American Coaster Enthusiasts (ACE), has donated \$5,000 dollars towards the restoration of the historic structure. The Scenic Railway is the United Kingdom's oldest roller coaster and will be the centrepiece in the world's first amusement park of thrilling historic rides at Dreamland Margate, being developed by the Dreamland Trust. This donation demonstrates the level of international interest in the future of the Scenic Railway, which is a remarkable and fragile survivor, and we will ensure that it is used 100% on its restoration. ACE was founded in 1978 as a not-for-profit, all volunteer club to foster and promote the conservation, appreciation, knowledge and enjoyment of the art of the classic wooden roller coaster and the contemporary steel coaster.

Brooke Pether, Operations Manager at Melbourne's Luna Park (home of a 98-year-old Scenic Railway - the oldest continuously operating roller coaster in the world) sent us a birthday message:

*"Happy birthday! 90 years is quite an achievement for a person let alone a rollercoaster. Well done to everyone who has played a part in the success of your Scenic Railway. We are honoured to be able to wish you all well on this great day. Dave Collard [former Scenic Railway brakeman] keeps us well informed here at Melbourne's Luna Park with the progress of your historic amusement park due to open in 2012 and we are very excited as it draws closer. How lucky you are to have someone on board who has so much passion and enthusiasm for the project."*

*"Other exciting events of 2012, our Park's and our Scenic Railway's 100th birthday falling on December 13th. What an exciting year for historic wooden coasters it will be. So we say raise a glass to celebrate the 90th anniversary of the opening of Margate's Scenic Railway and many more to come. Congratulations from all the team at Luna Park, Melbourne, Australia."*

In other news, we have acquired the famous Southsea Corbière Wheel. Built in 1956, it operated initially at Coney Beach Amusement Park in Porthcawl before moving to Southsea's Clarence Pier Amusement Park, where it spent most of its life. It was acquired by Blackpool Illuminations Manager Richard Ryan in 2001, who restored it, and it then spent 2005 and 2006 operating at Southport's Pleasureland. Following the closure of Pleasureland, the ride went into storage in Blackpool.

Following three years of discussions with Richard, the deal was finally done earlier this year, but we have only just announced as it took us this long to get the money together! The inspection and transport of the ride was organised by Jonathan Bryant and Bob Preedy of the Dreamland Trust.

The wheel was designed by Henri Corbière, a French engineer, and built by ARM (UK) LTD. The design was state of the art at the time. The design was probably the first to have 'spherical motion' i.e. the whole wheel revolves around its base as well as the normal vertical plane, such that the gondolas travel in a gentle spiral path describing a sphere through space. This concept required new thinking in respect to the design and construction of the wheel.

The Wheel made its way from Blackpool, via four lorries, and was delivered to the Carter's Steam Fair yard in Maidenhead on Tuesday 15th June where it will be refurbished. It took twelve hours to load up and seven to unload. It is hoped that the ride can be up and running for 2011 as a preview attraction for Dreamland. More information on the Wheel can be found on the Rides page at [www.dreamlandmargate.com](http://www.dreamlandmargate.com).

### *Nick Laister*

Chairman, The Dreamland Trust

[www.dreamlandmargate.com](http://www.dreamlandmargate.com)

[www.savedreamland.co.uk](http://www.savedreamland.co.uk)



*The Corbiere Wheel, Southsea 1991.*

## **NEW RELEASE:**

# **The Hoppings: Newcastle's Town Moor Fair**

**by Paul Lanagan**

A 136-page pictorial book chronicling the history of the Hoppings, from the 1882 Temperance Festival through to the current mega-fairground. Containing hundreds of photos covering the Victorian steam machines and modern Millennium thrill rides.

The book features hundreds of faces from the showmen who make the fairground what it is, plus an exclusive behind-the-scenes look at how the fair is set up by Fair Surveyor, Albert Austin. Author Paul Lanagan has worked at the Town Moor Fairground School since 2003 and during that time has captured and recorded many unseen moments, many of which are featured in the book.

**Format:** Paperback

**Number of Pages:** 136

**Publication Date:** 18 June 2010

**Publisher:** Books of the NorthIndex

RRP: £11.99

**Our Price: £11.79**

To buy this book, please send a cheque for £11.79, plus £2.99 postage and packing, payable to 'Joyland Books', to:

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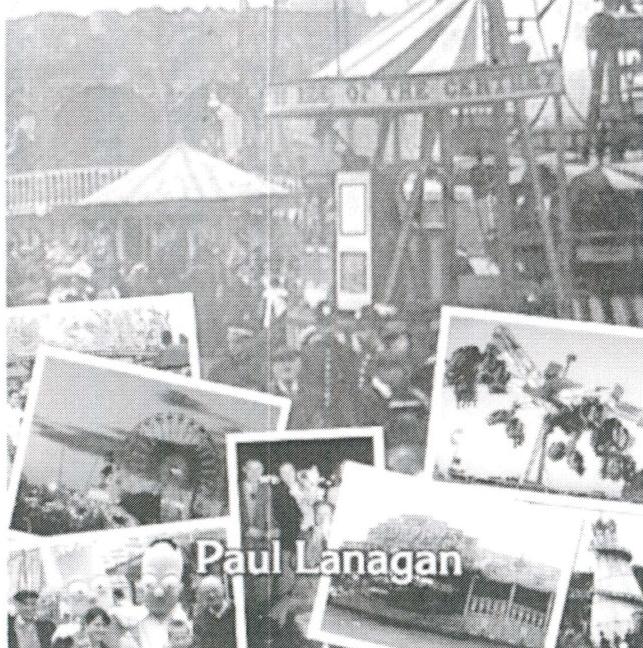
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# THE HOPPINGS

Newcastle's Town Moor Fair



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Visit our 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebrations at  
[www.themagineye.co.uk](http://www.themagineye.co.uk).

# Merrivale Vintage Arcade

By Stuart Dale

It was Monday the 21<sup>st</sup> June and we were off once again, this time the destination was the seaside resort of Great Yarmouth on the Norfolk coast. The journey down was a smooth one with very little in the way of traffic, so as we were making such good time we decided to make a slight detour from our planned route and pay our respects to Oliver Whales. After a little searching we found where he was laid to rest in the little village churchyard not far from where he was born.

Well rested we set off on the last leg of our journey arriving in Great Yarmouth at about 3.15, only to be told that our hotel room had been trashed the night before and our booking had been transferred to another hotel a mile further up the front. As you can imagine, we were a little put out at this turn of events, but with hindsight we found this alternative accommodation to be excellent.

The following morning after we had had our breakfast, we set off camera in hand in the general direction of the Wellington Pier, because I knew that nestled between the Wellington Pier and the Pleasure Beach was the Merrivale Model Village. This was to be my third visit to this famous Great Yarmouth landmark, in fact the model village has stood on this 1 acre site since 1961, prior to that the land made up part of the Pier gardens. “*What has this got to do with slot machines?*” Well, in 2004 the Model Village was taken over by Peter Williamson, who is also the chairman of the Norfolk Tourist Attractions Association. Peter soon started a schedule of repairs and modernisation throughout the whole site, and in 2007 he added a vintage slot machine arcade, tearooms and gift shop. These are housed in a group of buildings that run along the south perimeter wall of the Model Village and had stood empty and unused for many years. They have now been restored to a very high standard; the food in the tearooms is also to the same high standards and not to be missed.



There are two ways to get into the vintage arcade, you can get a ticket at the kiosk and make your way through the model village exiting into the gift shop and vintage arcade, or you can simply walk in through the south gates past the tea rooms and into the arcade that way. I would recommend walking through the Model Village. You will find over 200 1:12 scale model buildings interlaced with 100s of metres of 2.5 inch gauge working model railways all set in attractive landscaped gardens, and as Peter is always adding to and changing the layout there are always new things to discover.



*The miniature fairground in the model village.*

Once you step inside the gift shop you will find that you can purchase bags of tokens "old pennies" to feed the machines in the vintage arcade, which has a good selection of wall mounted and floor standing machines. Due to their size it is not often that you see the large Ruffler & Walker race type machines on display, but in this arcade you will find not one but four of them all fully working and ready for you to play. They are Cycle Racer, Grand National, Grand Prix Racer & Helicopter Race. And no vintage arcade would be complete without my wife's favourite machine "The Laughing Sailor" which I think must have had a timer fitted to the start circuit as it would suddenly start laughing every few minutes for no apparent reason, I can only think that he is glad to see me? And for the princely sum of 1 penny you can find out just what the butler did see by cranking the handle on the Mutoscope viewer. The arcade also has a good selection of prize giving machines like the large floor standing Waltonian rotary merchandiser, a machine where you always but not quite win a prize. So in goes another penny to try again, or you could try one of the two crane machines, now I did manage to win something on them...but what I am going to do with a small plastic camel I am not sure?

The wall machines range from the humble "Allwin" (of which a good selection are on display ready to part you from your money), to the various fortune telling machines that will predict your good fortune and no doubt tell you that you will come into some money soon! One of my favourite machines is the circle skill with the payout drawers at the bottom tempting you with a packet of sweet cigarettes; not that it ever paid me out anything! But I nearly won... in fact I nearly won on every go. After I had used up my fifth bag of old pennies I glanced at my watch and realised that over 2 hours had passed since we entered the Model Village, time flies when you are having fun. So we made our way to the tearooms for a slice of fresh cream cake, a pot of tea and a well earned sit down. As we sat in the tearooms looking out over the courtyard that leads to the promenade I counted no less than 25 coin operated kiddie rides of all shapes and sizes. These alone would keep kids happy for most of the day as they pretended to be spacemen or cowboys or whatever took their fancy.

We were only in Great Yarmouth for 4 days but we managed to call at Merrivale every day as we made our way back to the hotel, me for a play on the vintage slots and Mrs Dale?...well she has a soft spot for cream teas. So everyone's a winner!



*A nice selection of machines in the old penny arcade.*



*Another view of Peter's very well appointed arcade.*

## **Editor's Note:**

Many thanks to Stuart for his account of his visit to Peter's immaculate model village and old penny arcade. Stuart mentioned Oliver Whales at the beginning, and I can reveal that he is currently undertaking research into the history of Oliver Whales and his business. Stuart is desperately trying to make contact with members of the Whales family, and as we know that the family have in the past taken a keen interest in acquiring Whales machines, we wondered if any member might be reading this? So if you are a descendant of Oliver Whales or if you know a member of the family, please contact me via the magazine, and I will pass details onto Stuart.

*Jerry*

# To the Complaints Department

By Richard Brewerton

After being a faithful subscriber to your excellent magazine for some time now, I find myself at my wits end, to say nothing of some physical discomfort. There was a time when, like clockwork, same day each month, my copy of MMM would arrive on the doormat. You become accustomed to things in life that you can depend on. Over the years I have come to depend on Jerry each month to produce a fine periodical packed with interesting subjects concerning my hobby, all told with knowledge unsurpassed. This is a man who is regular in his habits. He knows when to send the magazine off to the printers; when it will be due back; when to stuff them in envelopes; which sticky labels to stick on the front and when to post them off to reach us by the same day each month. At this point, things start to go wrong.

Some months, each day I looked out waiting for the postman, but he just walked straight past. No MMM. You can imagine the disappointment. Days would pass into weeks; I was being fed excuses. It's late arrival was being blamed on holidays, snow, too busy and so on, but knowing Jerry to be a man of integrity and dedication, I knew there had to be another culprit; and I knew just who.....the postman. Who else could it be? He obviously took great delight in depriving me of my MMM. Something had to be done, so I resolved to tackle him about it. Next day, I saw him coming down the path, so I grabbed him.

"Hello" he said, with a cheery smile. But it was definitely him, his eyes were too close together. I wasn't having any of these pleasantries, so dived straight in.

"Where's my MMM?" I demanded.

"What's that?" he said, trying to feign innocence.

"You know, my magazine from Jerry" I said.

"Oh this must be it" he said, rummaging through his bag, "Yes, MMM, Making Mouth-watering Meals." Then he looked me up and down, and decided for himself that I didn't need any meals, mouth-watering or otherwise. "No, maybe not" he said. "Ah, what's this? MMM, Martian Monster Movies."

"Do I look like the type who's interested in Martians? Now don't make me angry, you wouldn't like me when I'm angry." That worried him "Listen sonny," I said, My dad was a postman in the days when postmen were men and carried a huge sack around all day, not pushing a girlie trolley, and he delivered real mail, not pizza leaflets. What's that one there?" I could see in his bag.

"Ere, keep your hands out" he barked, "Yes, this must be the one" he smirked, "MMM, Massive Mammaries Monthly."

I thought I'd better check it out. Jerry must be splashing out on these full-page glossy pictures. I've seen bandits dressed up as cowboys and Indians, but these were new. There

was the handle at the side, and yes, that must be the coin slot, but I shouldn't think these would be much fun to play with just two cherries.

"Look, my MMM comes in a brown envelope."

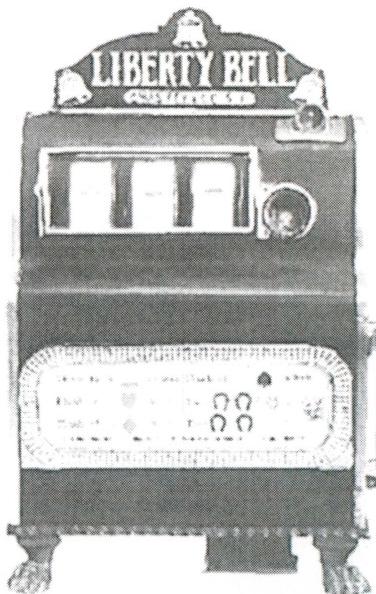
"Oh, it's one of those is it?" he said, whatever that meant. It was at this point that things started to go pear shaped. I noticed that he had a stupid name badge pinned to his stupid postman's jacket. David Pike it said. Now unfortunately, I had a Homer Simpson moment; I thought something but hadn't told my mouth to shut up.

"You stupid boy Pike" I said sarcastically. This didn't have the comedic effect I was expecting. He clenched his teeth and suddenly lunged forward, punching me on the nose.

"Ooow, dat was by dose, you buddy xxxxx. I'm reborting you for dat." I threatened. He muttered something under his breath, sounded like loony, and raised his arm again, so I ducked.

"Here, take this, you mental case and stick it" he shouted, pushing the glossy MMM into my face. Then he slinked off like the coward he was.

Later on when my eyes had stopped watering and my nose wasn't glowing so much I decided to read through the new MMM. So here's my complaint: Stop wasting our subs Jerry. I think we'd all rather read a nice article about some obscure machine than look at these new glossy photos. I would, however, like to subscribe to the new one as it contained an interesting motoring article that I enjoyed.



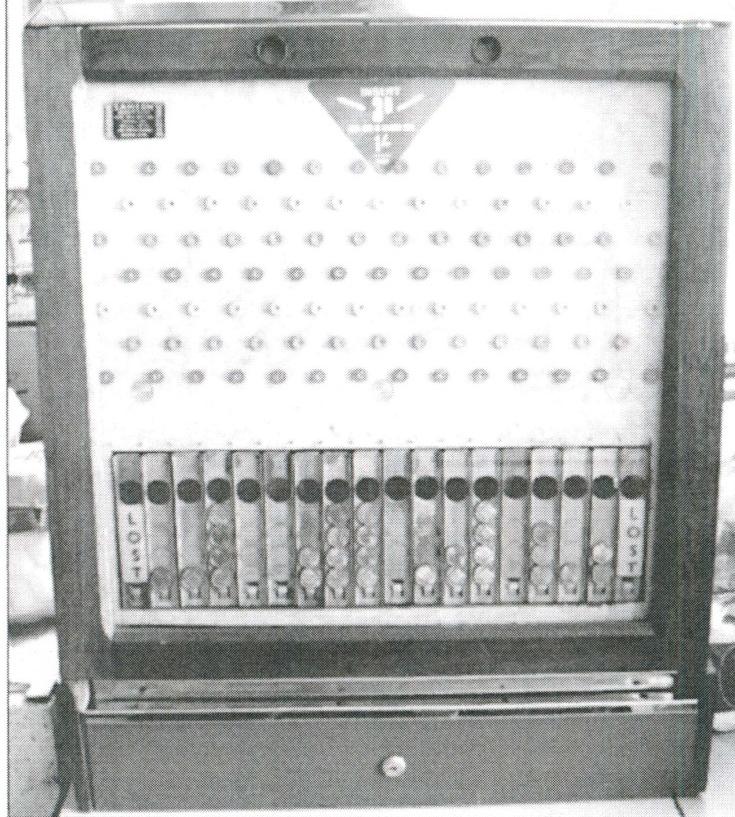
*Left, just for Richard, a very interesting picture of a young lady with no clothes on.*

*Right, for everyone else, a really boring picture of an old slot machine.*

3D  
PAYS  
1/-

# CHALLENGER

3D  
PAYS  
1/-



# Remember Me?

By Robert Rowland

Living in a seaside town like Mablethorpe, I was lucky enough to see a lot of penny machines that were about in the period 1965 – 70. Many are now mostly in my ageing memory bank. I would love to see just one picture of each of the many larger six or eight player electro-mechanical slots that were the showpieces of most amusement arcades in the 1960s. It's no good me trying to explain these marvels, because without a picture an explanation is pointless. As I have stated in previous articles, you had to be there to actually see and play them for yourself, in all their glory. It's a damn shame that very few pictures exist today, if any at all. As kids, we just assumed that these slots would be there forever. Of course, when decimalisation arrived in 1971, that signalled the end for most of these larger machines. Owners seemed to convert the smaller wall type machines to the new money, and those wonderful larger models became firewood.

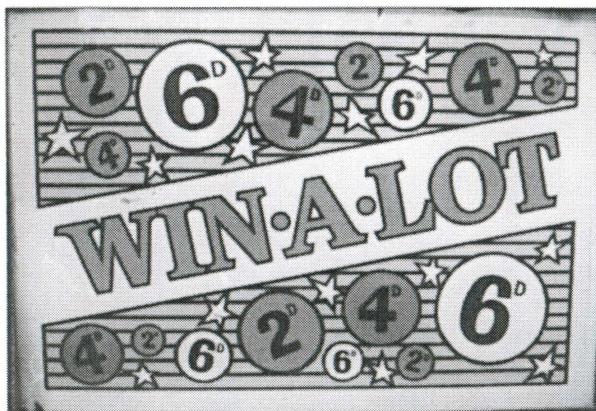
This brings us onto today's story. I remember, in 1966 on the back wall at Bingoland, they had a **3d Challenger**, which was the only one in town. I used to loiter around this machine waiting for holidaymakers to fill the columns up, so that I could then insert 3d and win a shilling ( $4 \times 3d$  bits). Inserting 3d was a big gamble for an eleven year old kid, as we only got  $2 \times 3d$  bits spending money per day, but overall I was quite successful on this machine – paid for a few visits to the back row of the pictures! However, my friend who I went around with at the time, could not remember this machine at all. This really frustrated me, I said "Oh you must remember that machine, it had a section of pins which diverted your 3d bit into any one of eighteen columns. Each column held  $4 \times 3d$  bits when full, then when the fifth coin dropped in, that released those four threepences and we won a shilling".

For years, I knew what I remembered and was talking about, but no one else did. Searching on the internet for a picture brought nothing, then in November 2009 a 3d Challenger appeared on ebay, and yes, I was the highest bidder, and got it! Of course, when my friend saw it, he remembered. Do any readers remember seeing or playing one of these? There is some confusion as to who actually made these. One well-known slottie seems to think it was made by Bradley but I disagree. The makers plate, which was on the machine when I bought it, states Robinson Partners (London) Ltd. Also, there is a Samson Novelty Co. sticker clearly displayed inside the front glass. If anyone has any information on this machine, please let us all know through Jerry and MMM.

The eighteen column 3d Challenger originally had no 'lost' columns at either end. I have added the two lost on mine, as the plastic end on both columns had worn with age, and would not hold the weight of  $4 \times 3d$  coins.

A similar story arose with another slot that I remembered playing in the 1960s. I could clearly picture it in my mind but no one else knew what the hell I was talking about, as yet again no picture could be found. But in December 2007 good old ebay came up with the goods, and despite a long trip to London to collect, I won the item and brought it home. Described on ebay as being possibly home built by a showman (not true though), this slot was just as I had remembered it from the 1960s.

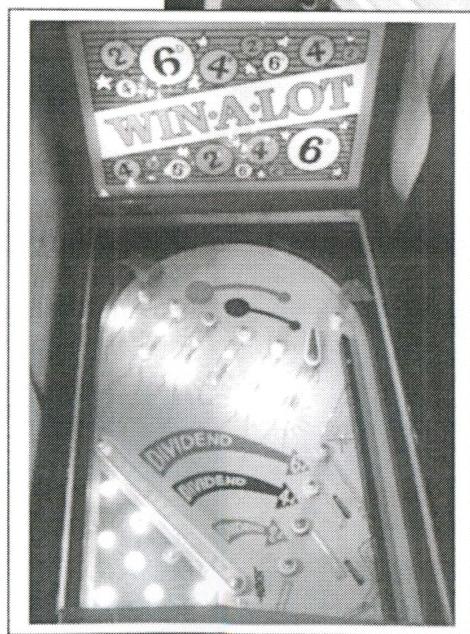
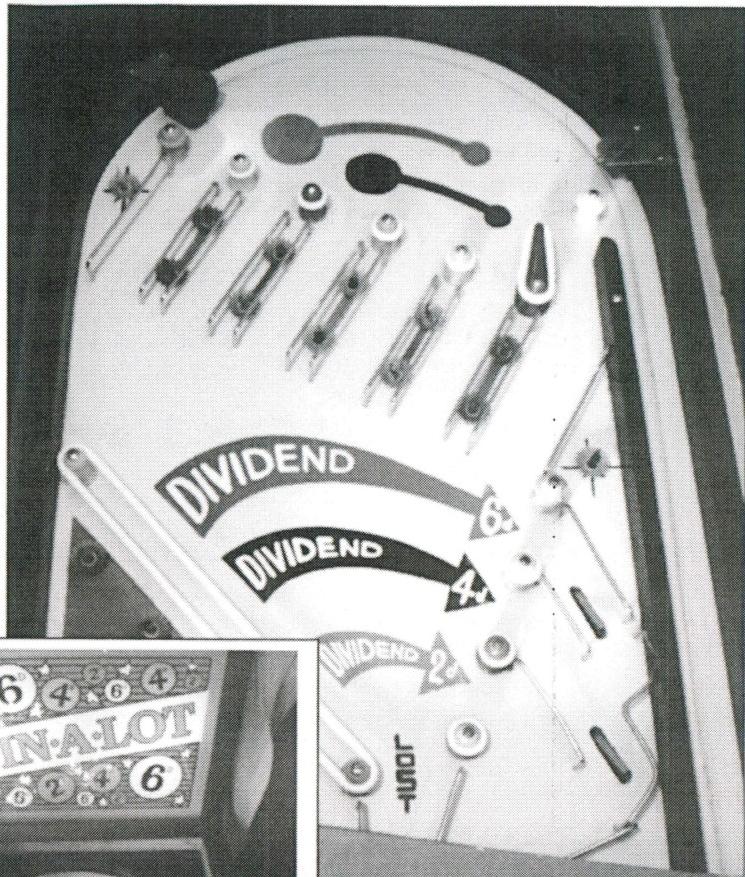
The machine in question is a flipperless pinball type slot called **Win-a-Lot**. You inserted a penny in the slide, fired the large ball onto the playfield and as the ball dropped it bounced onto a rebound rubber (as used on most pintables) and the ball could enter one of three winning sections, paying 2d, 4d or 6d. There was a lost down the centre. I used to play on this machine most days, simply because it was a fun game to play. As the ball dropped down onto the rubber, we were shouting “bounce” hoping there was enough bounce to send the ball into any winning section (hopefully the 6d win).



A friend who viewed my machine stated “surely those Christmas tree lights were not in the machine originally in the 1960s?” That’s exactly how they were I said. He didn’t believe me though. Anyway, I was finally proved right in April 2010, when another Win-a-Lot turned up on ebay. Sure enough, Christmas tree lights, just the same as on mine. I have no idea at all of the maker, there are no indications whatsoever on this machine, not even a supplier’s label. Have any readers got any ideas at all?

So, two very nice slots from the 1960s, which at one point were only a memory. Now I have both machines in my collection, and both fully working. I have posted a clip of both machines on Youtube, thus making sure that hopefully they will never be forgotten again. Maybe some readers will remember the two machines I have mentioned, or perhaps my article will trigger memories of your own about more forgotten slots from years ago.

*Robert Rowland*



Inset, the machine when lit.

Main picture, Win-a-Lot playfield.

**Lineage ads. are free to subscribers and will run for two issues, unless you instruct me otherwise. Please ensure I have your ads. by the 20<sup>th</sup> of the month for inclusion in the next month's issue. Remember to include your telephone number and the area where you live. Post or e-mail to the address on page 2**

## **For Sale**

Jennings one-armed bandit handle ball. New old stock – never been fitted to a machine, brand new and original. £14

Coin Denomination badges. Six in total, all made of metal of some sort. 3d and 6d, the rest American. £32

Jennings Indian head – not a repro! (this is the head, not a machine). Genuine brass Indian head, with three tapped mounting holes on the base, instead of the single bolt hole that the repros have. £26

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Jeremy 02476 763716 (Coventry)

[Jeremy.clapham@live.com](mailto:Jeremy.clapham@live.com)

## **Wanted**

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## **Pinball Machines bought and sold**

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## **For Sale**

Coin-operated Duck kiddie ride. Working order, but timer needs some attention. £90  
2 x 1960s Formica bandit stands. £20 each  
Decorative traditional gypsy style handcart, with wooden spoked wheels. £90

2 x stands, specially made some years ago for mutoscopes, one specifically for a cast iron machine. £50 each

John 01273 608620 (Brighton)

## **Wanted**

Sound Leisure vinyl jukebox

John 01268 455539 (Essex)

Mob. 07958 281554

## **Wanted**

Literature, brochures, photographs, etc of coin-operated Kiddie Rides.

Andy 020 8303 8291

[falconw@globalnet.co.uk](mailto:falconw@globalnet.co.uk)

## **For Sale**

Heaven and Hell fortune teller wall machine. Light oak case, in good working order, on 1d play. Just £295 ono.

Oliver Whales Win a Choc allwin. In good original condition, slight attention needed, but easy restoration. Just £395 ono.

Groetchen Mercury counter-top trade stimulator one-armed bandit. Nice condition, working on 1c play. £395 ono.

Les 01328 700945 (Norfolk)

[parrett1@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:parrett1@hotmail.co.uk)

## **Wanted**

Columbia parts:  
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Please phone after 2pm, 7 days.  
Mick 01795 666219 (Kent)

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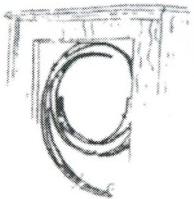
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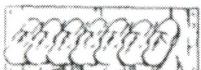
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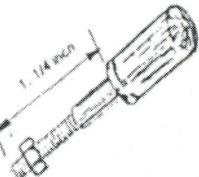
*Inner* with flat & nipple  
17½" inside length  
*Middle* 18" inside length  
*Outer* 40" inside length



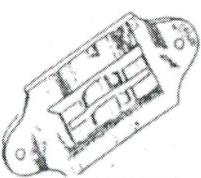
Win Tabs Red printer  
on Silver foil sticky  
backed 12 on a sheet!



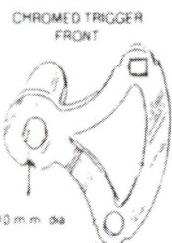
CHROMED 7 ball win  
gallery. 6 x 1.9/16



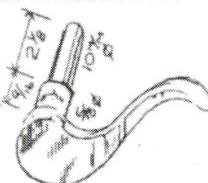
CHROMED THUMB  
STOP



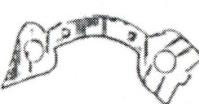
COIN SLOT  
to suit 2p but can  
be filed bigger



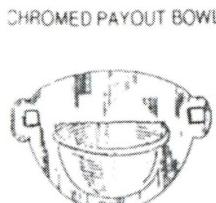
CHROMED TRIGGER  
FRONT



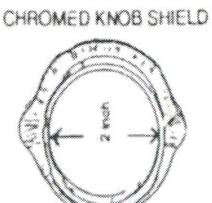
TRIGGER



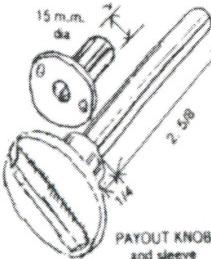
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Reversible.



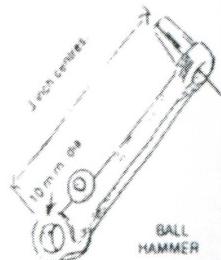
2.5 inch dia cup 2 x 0.25 inch fixing  
squares at 3.75 inch centres.



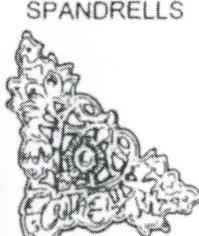
2 x tapped M5 fixing holes on  
extended nipples 2.1/2 centres.



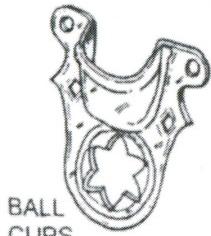
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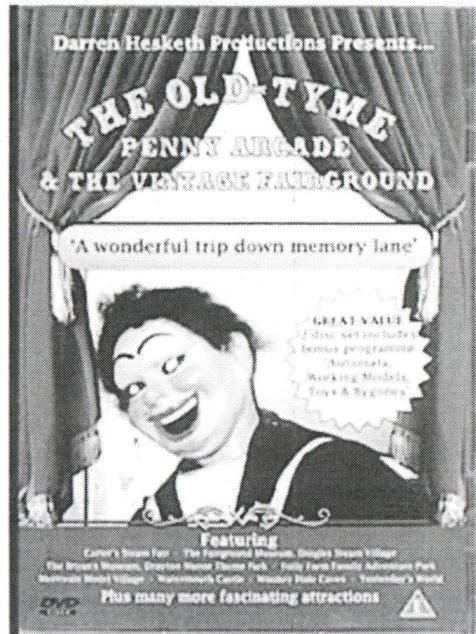
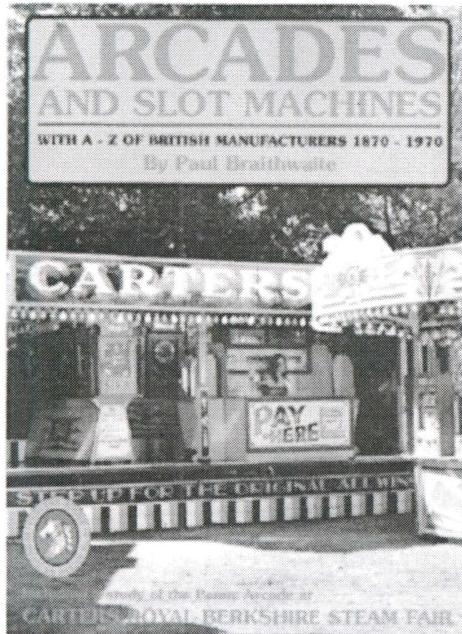
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